

SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK NEWSLETTER 02/2017

SAKHAROV FELLOWSHIP 5-17 JUNE 2017 – CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The European Parliament's **Sakharov Fellowship** offers up to **14 human rights defenders selected from non-EU countries** the opportunity to follow a **two week intensive training in Brussels** and the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC) in **Venice**. It has been organised annually since 2016 further to an initiative taken by the Sakharov Prize Network at the 25th Anniversary Conference of the Sakharov Prize. The Fellows will be selected ensuring gender balance, as well as representation of a variety of geographical areas and human rights issues. More information on the Fellowship 2017 on the [Sakharov Prize Network website](#)

European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI) mission to Vietnam

23-02-2017: The main aim of the visit of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI) in Vietnam was to engage in a constructive dialogue with the Vietnamese authorities and to assess the human rights situation in the country. The delegation was headed by the DROI Chair **Pier Antonio Panzeri**. "We recognise that Vietnam has made economic and social progress and begun a process of advancing economic and social rights; nevertheless we believe that to be successful in sustainable economic development, it is vital to hold open debates on policy areas, including political rights, freedom of expression, association, religion or belief," stated the DROI Chair. Link: [Press Release](#)

RSF concerned with US media and information freedom

06-02-2017: **2005 Sakharov Prize Laureate Reporters Without Borders (RSF)** releases statement with concern over President Donald Trump's latest attacks against American media outlets accusing them of reporting "fake news". RSF has highlighted that these attacks by the US President set a dangerous precedent for the world's press freedom predators, many of whom have had journalists imprisoned on charges like "reporting false information". Link: [RSF](#)

Dr Denis Mukwege supports rape survivors in Guinea

08-02-2017: **Sakharov Prize Laureate 2014 Dr Denis Mukwege** and a team from his Panzi Hospital visited Conakry, Guinea, between the 23 and 27 January with the help of the United Nations office working to end conflict-related sexual violence. Dr Mukwege and his team provided medical and psychological treatment for thirty survivors of sexual violence, including women and girls raped in a series of politically-motivated violent attacks since 2009. He also met with the health and justice ministries to discuss the need for sustained health support and the importance of investigating and prosecuting those. Link: [UN News Center](#)

Amnesty International report on Cuba

22-02-2017: **2005 Sakharov Prize Laureate Damas de Blanco** and **Sakharov Prize Laureate 2010 Guillermo Fariñas** were mentioned in Amnesty International annual report on human rights situation in Cuba. The latest Amnesty report noted that the human rights violations continue and that the situation has not improved since the renewed relations with the US. Freedom of expression and assembly remain subject to severe restrictions by the Cuban Government. The Amnesty report also recalled the hunger strike of Guillermo Fariñas and noted that members of Damas de Blanco continue to be subject to arbitrary arrest and detention. Link: [Amnesty International](#)

RSF report on Can Dündar court hearing 1 March 2017

24-02-2017: **2005 Sakharov Prize Laureate Reporters without Borders** have informed that the next hearing for **2016 Sakharov Prize finalist Can Dündar** is scheduled for March 1 for revelations about

deliveries of Turkish weapons to Syrian Islamist groups. Although the verdict should be announced, Dündar, then editor-in-chief of *Cumhuriyet*, will not be present at the hearing as he is in exile in Germany. He is being pursued for “assistance to a terrorist organization”, along with with **Erdem Gül**, representative of *Cumhuriyet* in Ankara, their alleged source (a CHP deputy) of the prison, and the Gülen movement.

Leyla Zana temporarily detained in Turkey under terror allegations

8-02-2017: **1995 Sakharov Prize Laureate Leyla Zana** was released after being temporarily detained by police on February 8 after an investigation carried out by the Public Prosecutor’s Office on charges of “being a member of armed terror organization.” Zana was arrested after she refused to testify to prosecutors and was brought forcibly by police. The local court of Diyarbakir eventually ordered her release on probation. Link: [Rudaw](#)

EP URGENCY RESOLUTIONS

16-02-2017: In three resolutions voted during the February Plenary, the European Parliament has voiced deep concern about the intimidation and harassment of Francesca Ramirez and other human rights defenders in [Nicaragua](#), deplored the recent use of the death penalty in [Kuwait and Bahrain](#), and strongly condemned the murders of human rights defenders and journalists in [Guatemala](#). Link: [EP Press Release](#)

SAKHAROV PRIZE NETWORK EVENTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION IN MARCH

During March, the Sakharov Prize network will participate in or host the following events:

European Parliament Information Office in Rome, 6 March

Hauwa Ibrahim, Sakharov Prize Laureate 2005 will participate in a panel discussion on woman’s rights in the light of the International Women’s Day.

Women’s Economic Empowerment: Let’s Act Together, Brussels 8 - 9 March

This meeting celebrating International Women’s Day 2017 will gather parliamentarians from EU Member states and from the neighbourhood countries. **Lamya Haji Bashar, Sakharov Prize Laureate 2016** and **Hauwa Ibrahim, Sakharov Prize Laureate 2005** will give keynote speeches and will speak in a workshop “Global perspective: freedom from violence and empowerment”.

European Parliament Information Office, Brussels 8 March and Ljubljana 17 March

Lamya Haji Bashar, Sakharov Prize Laureate 2016 will participate respectively in a debate on Human Rights and Fighting Violence against Women in Brussels and on a roundtable with MEPs to discuss the situation of human rights in the world in Ljubljana.

Strengthening Regional Human Rights Defenders’ Networks in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Turkey, Brussels 20-21 March

The conference will be organised at the European Parliament in partnership with The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and it will gather together 70 human rights defenders from 11 countries: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.